Juanita S. Dilley
Clover Lick, W.Va.
Pocahontas County
May 2I, I940
Ch. 5 section I c

Games and Pastimes----Men-----Boys

* Jeremiah Friel, who came here around I774, was a jovial companion for his sons. He encouraged them, from infancy, in the favorite pastimes of the period; running foot races, wrestling and boxing. A favorite indoor game for boys was called" weighing bacon". A loop was fixed at one end of a rope or trace chain, the other end was thrown over a beam or joist, The feet were placed in the loop, then seizing the other end of the rope with the hands they would swing. It required practice and nice balancing to swing, although it looked easy to one who had never tried it. For safety it was best to have a big pile of straw on which to light.

Jeremiah Friel and his sons were noted reapers. At that day there was cooperative harvesting. Robert Gays' wheat was usually the first to ripen. Beginning there, all hands from Jim Bridgers, at Harter, down would come hallowing and singing, waving their sickles, eager to see who could cut the first sheaf and make the best record. Then from field to field up the river the harvesters would progress until Bridger's harvest was reaped; thence to William Sharp's, Josiah Browns, John Sharp's and sometimes Robert Moore's at Edray. Then the sickle club would disband with great hilarity to their respective homes.

The youngest son of Valentine Cackley, Sr. was named Jacob He seems to have been very fond of athletic sports, running, wres-

tling and pitching quoits. One of the most popular divresions of that time was to see who could throw a pumpkin the highest and catch it as it came down. Another diversion was to skip flat stones over the water.

oo About the year of 1890, thirty-five Englishmen settled at Mingo in Randolph County. Since an Englishman is always interested in outdoor sports, they educated the boys of Pocahontas and Randolph in the sports of England. It was a 27 mile ride from Marlinton to Mingo, but every boy by some hook or crook managed to have a horse to ride to Mingo. They taught them to play cricket, tennis, polo, cribbage, and gave them an insight into steeple chase, paper chase, and fox hunting on horse back. But the game that took like wild fire was soccer football.

One of the best things that they learned from the English was that it was the thing to respond instantly and agree to play in any game, at any time, to the best of their ability and skill. They got the boys so they would try anything, and they soon found that they could hold their own.

Football seems to have been the principal sport of England at that time. As soon as the boys of Pocahontas saw the difference between the educated and the uneducated foot, the whole country got animated. There were 25 teams in Pocahontas County alone.

There was great devotion to the game. Great crowds of people lined the grounds. The season lasted from October to May, match games not being scheduled in the dead of winter on account of snow possibilities, but practice games went on thr-

ough the winter, when the ground was bare.

No age seems to have been barred. Up on Elk River there were giants in those days, captains courageous, whom nothing could daunt. A match game against another community was pulled off one day and on the Elk team there were three generations in direct line represented. In the goal, Grandfather William Gibson; afullback his son James Gibson; and as a forward his grandson Levi Gibson. In 1925, James Gibson as a man 68 years old, ran with the hounds after a bear, from Gibsons Knob to the Revener place on the head of Slaty Fork and was at the killing of the biggest bear that ever fell in these parts, Old Lame Paw, the sheep killer.

It was about this same time that Uncle John Hannah, up in the eighties, put on four pair of specs and won the turkey at a rifle shooting match.

Soccer football can be played on every village green. It does not take any special kind of clothes, and it is the very best training for Rugby football.

The six footers on Elk had a famous team called "Ironsides. They were hard to beat.

As between the Marlinton team and the Mingo team, the Ironsides favored the English team, so to reach Mingo the Marlinton boys had to travel across Elk through a hostile country.

The Ironsides fuenished some great athletes in those days, and by the way, Elk has the world record for a running broad jump. Joseph Hannah, a pioneer, was made the victim of a practical joke. It was arranged to give him a scare. He was to work in the field with Old Dick a negro. Indian times were

still fresh in the memory. Three boys fired on them from the woods. Old Dick fell down and pretended to be shot. Hannah ran to the house. On his way he jumped a gully. Later when the jump was measured it was found to be 42 feet from one track to the next.

After the football games each man was required to tell a story, sing a song, or turn a summersault for the amusement of the crowd.

* History of Pocahontas-- Price

oo W.Va. Blue Book 1926
Andrew Price

Juanita S. Dilley
Clover Lick, W.Va.
Pocahontas County
May 27, 1940
Ch. 5 section 2-a — I, 2a

Killing frosts early and late made the working of land a precarious source of substance until a comparatively recent period in the history of our county. As late as 1810, the fact that corn would ripen at Marlins' Bottom was nearly a years wonder. Gardens for onions, parsnips, cucumbers, pumpkins, and turnips; patches of buckwheat, corn, beans and potatoes, for many years comprised the most of pioneer farming enterprise in the way of supplementing their supplies of game and fish. The implements used for clearing and cultivating these gardens and truck patches were of home manufacture and for the most part rather crudely constructed, as mere makeshifts are apt to be.

The people were frequently molested when at work, by the Indians. On this account the men would carry their guns with them and have them always in ready reach. It being scarcely possible to keep a work horse because of raiding Indians, most of the labor of the farming had to be done with hoes. In the course of time when horses and oxen could be kept and used, plows were in demand. The first plows were made entirely of seasoned hardwood. Later an improvement was made by attaching an iron plate to the plowing beam, and the "shovel plow" was evolved.

To smooth and pulverize the earth for planting, the

place of the harrow was supplied by a crabapple tree or a blackthorn bush, pressed down by heavy pieces of wood fastened on by hickory withes or strips of leatherbark, and some nice woork was done by those extemporized harrows. The first harrows that superseded these crab and blackthorn, had wooden frames shaped like a big A, and the teeth were made of seasoned hickory or white oak.

The first scythes that were used to cut the meadows were hand- made by the neighborhood blacksmith, and were hammered out instead of whitted to put them in cutting order. The sneathes were straight sticks, and in mowing the mowers were bent into horizontal, semilunar farded shapes, as if they were looking for holes in the ground, or snakes in the grassy weeds.

For handling hay or geain, forks were made of bifurcated saplings pf maple or dogwood carefully pealed and well seasoned. They became as smooth as ivory. These forks went out of use by 1860.

When the pioneer came to need more land than mere patches, they would chop three or four acres and a log rolling was in order. By invitation the neighbors for miles would meet with their teams of horses or oxen, to assist in putting up logheaps for burning. This being done a feast was enjoyed and all returned homewards. The next thing was to burn the heaps. Outside the clearing a wide belt was raked inwardly to prevent the fire from getting away. The preferred time for burning the logs and brush was at night when all would be still and calm. It was an impressive sight

to witness as the smoke and flames of the burning heaps rose like pillars of fire by night, while the men, sweaty and sooty, passed among them keeping up the fires.

Another interesting pioneer social gathering was the"raising" of the dwelling or barn. No pay was expected, simply the return of a like favor when notified.

As a rule pioneer festivities were orderly, yet ocassionaly there would be a few persons at the gathering who prided themselves in being and doing ugly things. Somrwhere about the premises there was something they would speak of as "Black Betty". After a few visits to this jug there would be a few fights, which made the gathering the talk of the neighborhood until some other exciting thing came around.

In the early times now under consideration it was an essential matter that every thing needed for comfortable use about the house should be made at home or some where in the immediate neighborhood. Thus it came that pioneer wives and daughters were not only ornamental but very useful ih promoting the comforts and attractions of their homes by the skill of their willing hands. Every household of any pretentions of independence or thrift had a loom, spinning wheel,a flax breaker, sheep shears, wool cards, and what ever else needful for changing wool and flax into clothing and blankets.

Sheep were raised on the farms and were usually sheared by the boys and girls. The wives and daughters would thereupon scour, card and spin, weave and knit the wool

into clothing.

Flax was grown in the flax patch, usually a choice bit of ground. When ripe the flax was pulled by hand, spread in layers until dry upon the ground where it had been pulled then bound in bundles, carried away and spread very neatly over the cleanest and nicest sod to be found, most commonly the aftermath of the meadow. Here it remained with an ocassional overturning until it was "weathered". This required three or four weeks. Then it was gathered, bound in bundles and stored away in shelter until cool, frosty days in late fall, winter or early spring. Then it would be broken by the flax breaker, then scutched by the scutching knife over an upright board fastened to a block. Then what was left of the woody part by the breaker and scutching knife would be combed out by the hackle and was now ready to be spun and woven into tow a coarse linen cloth. The finer fiber was woven into fine linen. This work was done by the women, and neighbors usually helped each other. They had what was called flax scutchings. Flax was most commonly put through the entire process from planting to wearing without leaving the farm on which it was grown

From--- Hist. of Pocahontas County
W. T. Price

June 11, 1940 Nelle Y. McLaughlin

Juanita S. Dilley
Clover Lick, W.Va.
POCAHONTAS COUNTY
July 5, 1940
Chapter 5 section 1c

BOOKS AND MAGAZINES

I have not been fortunate enough to find the names of any magazines that were read or received by the people of Pocahontas, but when I looked through the old wills and bills of sale, I did find the names of some books that they owned, and of course the name of the people who owned them. From the inclosed list you can see that the most of them were either text books or religious books. I was however rather surprised at some of the text books that they owned for I had been lead to believe that they were interested only in the three R's, and of course in spelling.

James Cooper, in will dated 1844, " To my wife Nancy Cooper my family Bible during her life time, and then to be left to my daughter Malinda. The remainder of the books to be equally divided between the balance of the heirs."

In 1849, William Young bequeathed to his wife one book case and a small library of books which were valued by the appraisers at $35.00. None of them were named.

Thomas Gammon-1852- one book case and the following books Encyclopedia Geography-3 Vols., Constitution of the States, Wesley--Philosophy 2 Vols. Latin Dictionary, Randolph's Reports, History, 19 other books.

John Young--will 1843--To my son John Young the 1st. and

3rd. volumns of Clark's Commentary, also 1st. and 3rd. vols. of Wesley's Sermons. To my daughter Jane Cochran, Woods Dictionary in two volumns, Simpsons Plea for Religion, and Fletcher's Appeal to Matter of Fact and Common Sense. To my daughter Sarah Ann Young, 2nd. volumn of Clark's Commentary. To my daughter Martha Adkison, the 4th. vol. of Clarks Commentary. To my son Andrew Young, the remaining part of all of my printed books either now in my possession or loaned out to my neighbors."

George Masingbird--appraisment 1838.

Dr. Adam Clark's Commentary on the Scriptures-----$9.

Dr. " " Sermons, Watson's Wesley

Life of Adam Clark, A number of Methodist Magazines,

A quantity of newspapers. The newspapers and magazines were not named.

Joseph Wooddell--1842, Sundry books, Harvey's Meditations 2 vols. Walkers Dictionary, Elements of Useful Knowledge, Kentucky Harmony.

Preston Wooddell------History of the United States, 6 books, 1 Hymn Book, Bible , Arithmetic.

William R. Moore--bill of sale-- 1865. Key to Ray's Arithmetic, Grammar, McGuffeys Third Reader, Rays Algebra, Natural Phillosaphy, Conquests of the Bible, Medical Chemistry, Speller and Definer, Davies Surveying, Mitchels Geography, Phillosaphy and History, Walkers Dictionary, Tradesmans Companion Mechanics Companion, One lot of books and pamphlets.

James Paine----1857---Medical Examiner, Days Algebra, Turners Chemistry, four vols. Thompsons Chemistry, Latin Reader, Elements of Bottany, Reed's Essays, Two Music Books, One lot of old books.

George Poage-----1855, 1 Confession of Faith, 2 Hymn Books, 1 Smiths Grammar, 20 other bokks.

John Dilley------1856, One book case, History of the United States, Arithmetic.

Samuel Whiting---1856, Testament, Bible, Hymn Books, Life of Wesley, Four other books.

John Sharp------Book case and books.

Soloman Conrad---Bible Pictorial History-value--$10.

One lot of other books.

William Harris--1861, One lot of books.

Henry Moffett Poage--1863, One lot of books,

Pictorial History of the U.S.

James W.Ruckman------15 books.

Edward Curby---------One lot of books.

William Wanless------One lot of books.

William A. Yeager----One lot of books.

Henry Yeager--------2 Singing Books.

One lot of other books.

William Kellison---Book case and books.

William McLaughlin--1866---One lot books.

James L. Sharp----One lot books.

George Kerr-------11 books.

James E. Courtney--1866--18 books.

Solomon Arbogast----One lot of books.

Henrietta Galford---- " "

Samuel Gay----------6 books.

Abraham Hill----1871, 4 vols. Clark's Commentaries

Cooks Notes on the Bible.

Morning Exercises,
History of Romania,
Wesleys Sermons,
Nine other books.

William Kelley--- One lot of books, 1 Doctor Book.

Daniel Kerr---- -1857, 7 books, Family Bible, Dictionary.

John Slavens-----History of the Devil and Others.

William M. Duffield-----1839---Book case and books.

James Lewis---1841--------One lot of books.

Moore McNeel-----1843----12 books.

Anthony Callison--------1 Family Bible, Map of Greece, History of Greece, Sundry old books.

Robert C. Warwick ---1845----One lot of books.

John Sutton--------One Bible and three other books.

George Puffinbarger-----Nine books.

John McNeel-----1848----One lot of books.

William Edmiston---1849---Four vols. Fetchers Works, 1 lot books.

John Arbogast------- One lot books to Margaret Arbogast.

Arthur Grimes ------One lot books.

Jacob Slavens--------" "

Richard Hudson--------History of the United States, 1 lot books.

Catherine Rhea-----1856--- One lot books.

Moses Arbogast----1857----7 books.

From----Court Records

"Mrs. Mary V. Warwick(Jacob) had a well supplied library of books in the nicest style bindings, and she made good use of them, too.

George Kee, who came to America about 1780, read a great deal. He had a copy of John Locke's "The Human Understanding. He had read and re-read it until it was worn out, and he was unable to get another copy. He not only read a great deal but reflected on what he did read, and could converse fluently and intelligently on what ever subject was to be discussed in books or the public journals. He was the first person I had ever heard say any thing about John Locke. Mr. Kee was anxious for me to read the book, so it turned out that one of the first books that I looked for in the college library was this book, In subsequent years when attending lectures, I found that one of the ablest lecturers did not seem as familiar with Locke as did my old friend in his mountain home. Georgw Kee came to Pocahontas as a peddler. Aaron Kee, a relative, furnished him some goods and sent him to this county to dispose of them. He became acquainted with John Jordan who had been in that business before him, and Jordan had him make his home with him. Mr Kee claimed to be an Associate Reform Presbyterian, commonly known as the Seceders or the Covenanters. It was a blessing to our county to have such a person ident fied with its history.

William Baxter of Edray was born in 1808. From early boyhood he manifested a great fondness for reading, and he improved his available opportunities very studiously. His father

John Baxter owned the largest and most select library then in the county, and william read most of the books. At an early age he began teaching and was one of the most popular teachers of his day. Isaac Moore was fond of books and was anxious to become a good scholar. He diligently improved his opportunities and with such assistance as he received from an old field school teacher he mastered the three R's. Fortunately for him Colonel John Baxter, a near neighbor, had what is believed to have been the largest and best collection of books in the county, probably as many as 100 volumes-history, travel, fiction, and poetry. He had use of these books at will, and thus his taste for reading was in a measure gratified until he could procure ample reading elsewhere."

From---History of Pocahontas

[redacted]

Andrew Price in the 1926 Blue Book, writes that about 1886 H. Rider Haggard's "She" was very popular. It was a fantastic tale of adventure. He says that he once took a copy to his boarding place where he was teaching. A hired hand picked up the book in the morning and spent the day reading instead of helping to get in the corn as he had been hired to do. The farmer was quite indignant. He further writes " In those days a great many wise men could not read or write. Their fine minds had been developed by thought and observation, perhaps in their narrow lines to greater heights than if they had been educated. But they had missed much pleasure and satisfaction. The advent of county papers(1863) and free schools made the art of reading more or

less universal, but it was the moving pictures that made young and enthusiastic readers. I can remember the time when habitual readers were regarded as queer. "He has read so many books that he has injured his mind," That was agreed to in solemn conclave around the stove in the village store, and many a worthy man and high class citizen has thanked God that he had not become an addict to reading."

July 8, 1940

I contacted Calvin W. Price this morning concerning the books, magazines etc. He said that they were brought here by the Circuit Riders. The Presbyterian ministers seem to have been the first to come, and they were all well educated, most of them having been educated at Edinburg or Princeton, therefore they were interested in reading matter, and distributed many books, mostly religious, among the people. Many of them were bound with leather and had been published in Edinburg Scotland, a few in London. Then came the Methodist Circuit Rider and the Baptist Missionary, not so well educated but they brought in John Wesley's books especially his book on Medicine and his Sermons. Then in the 1830's the American Bible Society and the American Tract Society sent to this county salesmen who sold hundreds of books.

Mr. Price thinks there were very few magazines and newspapers, and if there were they were also brought in by the ministers or the above mentioned societies. He also told me that Mr. William Gillmer has some of the old books from the John Baxter Library. Perhaps I can get the names of them some day when I am out that way.

finding

Nelle Y. McLaughlin
Marlinton, W. Va.

POCAHONTAS COUNTY

Chapter 5 - Section 1 - c

When the pioneer came to need more land than just patches, he would chop three or four acres smooth and a log rolling was in order. By invitation the neighbors for miles around would meet with their teams of horses or oxen, to assist in putting log heaps for burning. This being done, a feast was enjoyed and all returned home. The next thing was to burn the heaps. Outside the clearing a wide belt was raked inwardly to prevent the fire from getting away. The preferred time for using fire was at night when all would be still and calm. The first thing was to burn the clearing over, thus making away with smaller brush, undergrowth, and other trash. It was an impressive sight to witness as the smoke and flames arose like pillars, while the men, sweaty and sooty, passed among them keeping up the fires.

Another interesting pioneer social gathering was the raising of a dwelling or barn. No money was expected, just a return for like services when notified.

Huskings were popular at a certain period. In some communities they would come off in the day as a matter of business, not recreation or frolic. But the typical husking was prepared for with elaborate preparations. The ears would be pulled from the stalks, husks and all, and placed in ricks. This husking usually came off on some moon light night. A managing boss was chosen who arranged the men on opposite sides of the ricks, and the contest was who would be first to break over the crest line. Finding

a red ear was considered good luck and so every ear would be noticed as it was broken off. Whoever scored the most red ears was the champion of the husking bee. While the fathers and sons were enjoying themselves in this way, the mothers and daughters were gathered at the house, some cooking, others busy at the quilting. About ten or eleven o'clock the husking and the quilting were suspended, supper served and then came the hoe down, while stumbling toes would be tripped to the notes of a screeching violin. Such fiddling was called choking the goose or when there was no fiddle in evidence, someone only " patted Juba" about as distinctly as the trotting of a horse over a bridge.

As a rule the pioneer gatherings were orderly, yet on once in a while there would be a few persons at the husking who prided themselves in being and doing ugly. Somewhere about the premises there was someone or something they would speak of as "Black Betty". After a few secret visits to where Black Betty was, the consequences would be that colored Elizabeth with her songs, yellings, and a few fights would get in her work, and a fight or two would impart interest to the gathering, and make the occasion the talk of the neighborhood until some more exciting matter came up.

Material from: History of Po. Co. by Dr. Wm. T. Price

Nelle Y. McLaughlin,
Marlinton, W. Va.

Chapter 4-- Section 3

It was quite a task for the pioneer to clear the forest and build their homes with the poor equipment they had. They worked with a shop-made poll axe. In places the thickets of white thorn and wild crab were almost impenetrable. Bears and wolves were numerous and sheep had to be penned near the house to protect them.

Deer Creek received its name from the first settlers of the community and first appears in the records of June 7, 1780. Some of the old land patents record it as Deer Creek or Warwick. The deer were so numerous that they were a pest to the farmers who had to farm on a small scale only having small patches planted. The deer would sometimes destroy a whole crop. We have it by tradition that the pioneer Jacob Rumbaugh, whose home was on the land now owned by Monroe Beard, didn't have feed for his cow and fed her on deer meat one winter. It has since been conceded that a cow will eat dried venison. This probably happened at the old Rumbaugh sugar camp on the north fork where Jacob Rumbaugh had taken out a tomahawk right for twenty acres of land on conjunction with a man by the name of Covelough, who located on land now owned by James Cassell.

It was almost impossible for the pioneers to keep any stock and in order to do so, they had to be constantly on the watch. The Indians would steal the horses of the pioneers, kill their cows, and rifle the houses, taking or destroying anything they could get their hands on.